

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claims 1-26 (cancelled)

27. (new) A clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, the clamping apparatus comprising a plurality of first plates having first clamping surfaces made of a material of a first hardness, and a plurality of second plates having second clamping surfaces made of a material of a second hardness and slidable relative to the first plates, wherein each first clamping surface contacts an adjacent second clamping surface.

28. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the first plates are steering column reach adjustment plates.

29. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 28, wherein the second plates are steering column rake adjustment plates.

30. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the first plates are made of mild steel and the second plates are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

31. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the first plates are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy and the second plates are made of mild steel.

32. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the second plates are steering column rake adjustment plates.

33. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the plates of one of said pluralities are made of mild steel.

34. (new) A clamping apparatus according to claim 27, wherein the plates of the other of said pluralities are made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

35. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 27.

36. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 29.

37. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 30.

38. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus according to claim 31.

39. (new) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 35.

40. (new) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 36.

41. (new) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 37.

42. (new) A vehicle incorporating an adjustable steering column according to claim 38.

43. (new) A clamping apparatus for an adjustable steering column for a vehicle, the clamping apparatus comprising at least two plates that can be clamped to one

another, the plates having clamping surfaces that slide relative to one another in a collision, the respective clamping surfaces being made of materials of different hardnesses such that, during the relative sliding of the clamping surfaces in a collision, the material of lower hardness is sheared by the material of higher hardness and a build-up of the sheared material is formed between the clamping surfaces so as to increase a clamping load.

44. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein one of the two plates is made of mild steel and the other of the two plates is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

45. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43, wherein one of the two plates is a steering column reach adjustment plate, and the other of the two plates is a steering column rake adjustment plate.

46. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the steering column reach adjustment plate is made of mild steel, and steering column rake adjustment plate is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

47. (new) A clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the steering column rake adjustment plate is made of mild steel, and steering column reach adjustment plate is made of mild aluminum or aluminum alloy.

48. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 43.

49. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 44.

50. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 45.

51. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 46.

52. (new) An adjustable steering column for a vehicle incorporating a clamping apparatus as claimed in claim 47.